



12 January 2005



Aviation Safety

1. USAREUR aviation Soldiers are doing a great job around the world for the Army and our Nation. Army aviation is a vital part of the combined-arms team as we continue to fight the Global War on Terrorism. In the last 3 years of combat operations, our aircrews and maintainers have flown more than half a million hours. Our aviation commanders have faced and overcome the challenges of rapidly changing and complex combat operational environments, aviation reorganization, and the effects of pre- and post-combat deployment operations while balancing the requirements of individual and collective training.
2. A consequence of these challenges is increased risk. During the course of the Global War on Terrorism, the Army had 32 Class A accidents that cost the lives of 21 of our Soldiers. The causes of these accidents have included poor weather decisions, inappropriate crew mixes, stressed maintainers, and inadequate air mission briefings, among others. One of the qualities that we as a value- and capabilities-based Army cherish is our ability to make candid, professional assessments of our abilities and preparedness. Now is the time to do this.
3. The Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Cody, has directed that aviation organizations make certain regulatory, procedural, and cultural changes that will enhance our organizational abilities to identify and mitigate hazards that endanger our personnel and equipment. A copy of his directive can be found on the United States Army Safety Center Web site at https://safety.army.mil/vcsa_aviation_safety_directive.doc. The USAREUR G3 is publishing specific guidance to help USAREUR commanders and safety, standardization, and maintenance personnel implement the provisions of this directive. They include not only regulatory and policy changes, but cultural changes as well. We will embrace these changes wholeheartedly.
4. To meet the intent of General Cody's directive, we must change some of the ways that we do business.
 - **Commanders.** Take a candid look at how your organizations assess aircrew preparation and mission suitability. Enhance the high standards that you have vested in your aircrew training programs. Use your experienced personnel to evaluate your leading indicators [flight simulator training, abort rates, readiness-level training, and pilot in command (PC) training and evaluation]. Get personally involved in the training of your aircrews. Evaluate your air mission briefers.

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- **Senior NCOs.** Taking care of Soldiers as NCO business is something we value greatly. You have a wealth of experience that your Soldiers need. You are all familiar with the principles of the Cody Model and how to compensate for gaps in experience or knowledge. Your experience makes the difference—share it! Find out what is happening on the flightline and what your Soldiers think and need. Learn what problems they have, and find creative ways to solve them. Let them know we care.

- **Air Mission Briefings.** Air mission briefings serve a critical role in risk identification and mitigation. Air mission briefers must have the knowledge and experience to ask the hard questions, should be current and qualified in the mission profiles they are to brief, and must be able to assess and mitigate risks for the mission and aircrew. For this reason, all air mission briefers must have PC status.

- **Training.** Pilot briefings are one of the best means for experienced aviators to share the knowledge they have acquired with junior aircrews. Ensure your pilot briefings have the emphasis they need. Take a hard look at your PC and crew-chief training programs.

5. I have directed that aviation safety be the core theme of our next USAREUR Safety Council in March. The concepts we will discuss, however, are equally applicable to non-aviation units. In addition to the usual attendees, I expect all aviation commanders to brigade / divisional cavalry squadron / separate battalion level to participate (VTC is acceptable) in the council.

6. We are not fostering a “zero defect” or “risk adverse” environment. The rapidly changing and complex environments of our current operations require new, responsive, and innovative risk management. These changes will foster a command climate that promotes continued mission success through proper risk mitigation during mission planning and execution.

7. I want commanders to ensure this Bell Sends is distributed throughout their chains of command, including to all pilots and crew chiefs. Our renewed emphasis and upcoming publication of procedural changes will help ensure we continue to execute with excellence Any Mission, Anywhere.



B. B. BELL
General, USA
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ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!